

Alleged Evidence of the Moa from feathered Ornaments of Maori Weapons.

To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—I have been favoured by a letter from Dr. Hector, F.R.S., dated “Wellington, New Zealand, 20th May, 1879,” informing me that the paragraph from the ‘Otago Daily Times’ quoted in my ‘Memoirs on the Extinct Wingless Birds of New Zealand,’ vol. i. p. 448, relating to Dr. Hector’s examination of weapons alleged to have been brought by Capt. Cook from New Zealand, is incorrect, and that the editor’s remark, “strange that this evidence should have reposed in the cellars of the British Museum for a century,” is quite unfounded, and that Dr. Hector “never made any statement that could possibly bear such construction as is implied by the writer of the paragraph in question.”—R. OWEN.

On the Metamorphoses of the Blister-beetle (Lytta vesicatoria).
By M. J. LICHTENSTEIN.

During the first warm days at the end of May or the beginning of June, Blister-beetles in copulation are common on ashes, privets, lilacs, &c., and when placed under a bell glass the females soon make an excavation in the earth and deposit in it a mass of some hundreds of rather elongated whitish and transparent eggs. In a fortnight these eggs hatch and furnish the larvæ long since known as *Triungulini*, and figured by Ratzeburg and others. They are scaly, dark brown, with the meso- and metathorax and first abdominal segment white. This larva has very acute jaws, black prominent eyes, and two long caudal setæ.

After several fruitless trials the author got them to feed at first upon the stomachs of honey-bees, and then upon eggs and young larvæ of various species of bees, especially *Osmia* and *Ceratina chalcites*. Care must be taken to add honey to the eggs or young larvæ, because animal food is only fitted for this first larval form, and the little *Triungulinus* seems to have an instinctive knowledge that it must not touch the egg or larva unless there is beside it sufficient honey to feed the form which is to succeed it. But when this condition is fulfilled the little animal at once attacks the egg or the larva, and is seen to increase in size rapidly.

On the fifth or sixth day it changes its skin. It loses its caudal setæ and its brown colour, and becomes a small hexaped worm; its jaws become obtuse, its eyes much less brilliant; it quits the animal food and begins upon the honey. Five days later there is a fresh change of skin, and the first modifications become still more strongly marked; the jaws become still broader, and the eyes more and more obliterated.

Five days later there is another moult, when the eyes entirely disappear, the feet and the jaws become brown and horny at the extremity, the insect acquires the aspect of a small larva of a Lamellicorn, and is evidently destined to burrow in the ground.